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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 0914
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE 9534
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RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
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RHMFIUU/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
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RHMFIUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT, FOR, DS/IP/EAP, DS/DSS/DO, DS/TIA/OSAC, DS/P/MECU,
DS/TIA/ITA, DS/DO/P, DS/ICI/CI, DS/T/ATA, DS/TIA,
DS/TIA/PII, DS/CC, EAP/CM, S/CT, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP, PASS TO
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (TSA) OPERATIONS
CENTER, HONG KONG FOR RSO AND LEGAT AND USSS, SHANGHAI FOR
RSO, SHENYANG FOR RSO, CHENGDU FOR RSO, GUANGZHOU FOR RSO,
USSS HQS FOR INV, OPO, HNL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [CH](#) [CMGT](#) [ECON](#) [KOLY](#) [OVIP](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: BEIJING 2008 SUMMER OLYMPICS: USG SITUATION REPORT
25, 08/25/2008

REF: A. BEIJING 3253
[1](#)B. BEIJING 2994
[1](#)C. BEIJING 3049
[1](#)D. BEIJING 3254
[1](#)E. BEIJING 3241
[1](#)F. BEIJING 3106

[1](#)1. (SBU) The following cable provides information on
security, public diplomacy, political, and consular
activities related to the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games
as of 08/25/2008.

[1](#)2. (U) The interagency USG Joint Operations Center (JOC) can
be contacted on a 24-hour basis at the following numbers:

- JOC Direct Line: 011-86-010-6532-6966.
- U.S. Embassy Beijing: 011-86-010-6532-3431, JOC extension
[1](#)6200.
- JOC fax: 011-86-010-6532-4763.
- STE and fax: 011-86-010-6532-5163.

KEY ISSUES

¶3. (U) Successful Closure of the Summer Olympic Games: At approximately 2200 hours local time on 08/24/2008, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Jacques Rogge declared the Games of the 29th Olympiad officially closed. Praised by Rogge as a "truly exceptional Games," the Closing Ceremony of the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games opened to an explosion of fireworks, featured soccer star David Beckham punting a soccer ball into the crowd from a London double-decker bus, and ended with the extinguishing of the Olympic torch. Chinese security measures around the Olympic Green ensured that the ceremony concluded without disruption to the celebration.

¶4. (SBU) JOC Continues Operations through 08/26/2008: On 08/25/2008, the majority of U.S. Olympic athletes, family members, and coaches, as well as USG Olympic support personnel and American tourists, will begin departing from Beijing. The JOC will remain in operation through 1500 hours local time on 08/26/2008 in order to monitor the initial departures of U.S. citizens and to provide security liaison support as necessary.

SECURITY ISSUES

¶5. (SBU) Threats: There is no significant threat information to report.

¶6. (U) Incidents: There are no significant incidents to

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report.

¶7. (SBU) Olympic Protests: Eight American Detainees Released Early: On 08/24/2008, the Beijing Public Security Bureau (PSB) notified the U.S. Embassy that the eight U.S. citizens in detention for pro-Tibet activities had been deported to the United States via the 2100 hours Air China flight to Los Angeles; the eight--six of whom belonged to the group "Free Tibet Reporters" and two of whom belonged to "Students for a Free Tibet"--were originally to have been released on 08/30/2008 and 08/31/2008, respectively. The deportations came a week earlier than expected and followed several days of high-level Embassy engagement with Chinese officials on the matter (ref. a). These efforts culminated on 08/24/2008, when the Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) issued a public statement by Ambassador Clark T. Randt calling for the immediate release of the eight detainees. Using press guidance drafted by PAS, the Embassy confirmed the deportations on 08/25/2008 with CNN, AFP, AP, Bloomberg, the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post.

¶8. (SBU) Visa Ban for Detainees: Separately, Beijing PSB sources told the U.S. American Citizens Services (ACS) office that the eight Americans deported on 08/24/2008 will be barred from returning to China for a minimum of five years.

SECURITY OPERATIONS

¶9. (SBU) FLO Presence at the Closing Ceremony: Four USG Field Liaison Officers (FLO) accompanied U.S. athletes as they took to the field at the National "Bird's Nest" Stadium for the Olympics Closing Ceremony. The FLOs reported no incidents during the ceremony, though one U.S. athlete received assistance after being surrounded by enthusiastic fans. Crowd and access control--which have been ongoing concerns for high-profile teams and athletes--was adequate to the number of spectators in the stadium.

¶10. (SBU) Airport Departure Surge--Expect Delays: Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) representatives have indicated that 08/25/2008 through 08/27/2008 will be peak travel days at Beijing Capital International Airport (BCIA), with U.S. air carriers running sold-out flights during this timeframe.

The majority of Olympic athletes and visitors will be departing Beijing on these dates and athletes for the upcoming Paralympic Games starting on 09/06/2008 will be arriving. USG Olympic support personnel will be departing China in three waves on 08/25/2008, 08/26/2008, and 08/28/2008. TSA has noted the surge in departures, coupled with the arrival of Paralympics personnel, will likely put a strain on BCIA services and travelers have been advised to

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leave adequate time to get through ticket and security lines.

Separately, FAA and TSA notified the JOC that the 08/25/2008 United Airlines flight scheduled to depart Beijing at 1830 hours local time for Washington, DC, has been delayed until 0830 hours local time on 08/26/2008. Approximately 240 U.S. athletes--as well as a number of USG Olympic support personnel--were ticketed on this flight; the delay is not a result of the airport surge.

¶11. (SBU) Olympic Airport Statistics: According to FAA, U.S. commercial air carriers conducted 746 flights through BCIA to the United States--carrying over 150,000 passengers--between 08/01/2008 and 08/24/2008. Even with the large number of flights, FAA noted that only two were delayed due to mechanical issues and less than 20 experienced delays of 30 minutes or less due to weather or other conditions. These statistics are for U.S.-based carriers only and do not include flights conducted by the four Chinese airlines that also operate flights to the U.S. Airport officials had previously projected that BCIA would receive 1,500 flights and 260,000 passengers a day during peak Olympics travel dates--including 08/07/2008 and 08/27/2008 (ref. b). FAA also indicated that Chinese airport controllers successfully managed the large number of charter and corporate flights into and out of BCIA during the Olympic Games.

VIPS

¶12. (SBU) Delegation Departures: The members of the USG Delegation to the Olympics Closing Ceremony attended the Olympics grand finale without incident on 08/24/2008. On 08/25/2008, Secretary of Health and Human Services Michael Leavitt is scheduled to depart Beijing. The head of the Delegation--Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao--will depart Beijing on 08/26/2008 with onward travel to Shanghai.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

¶13. (U) Please see the Olympics Protests and Consular Affairs sections for updated information on PAS activities.

¶14. (U) Two U.S. Sponsors Drop London 2012 Olympics: U.S. corporate Olympic sponsors Kodak and Johnson & Johnson reportedly will not continue as part of the International Olympic Committee's "worldwide partners" for the 2012 London Games, according to a UK media source. Kodak, which has been involved in every modern Olympics since 1896, acknowledged it will focus on other marketing opportunities. Johnson & Johnson is expected to announce shortly its decision to reduce Olympic spending.

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CONSULAR AFFAIRS

¶15. (SBU) American Hotel Vandal Surrenders to Chinese Authorities: U.S. citizen Edward Romero was detained by Chinese authorities on the evening of 08/24/2008 while staging a protest at Tiananmen Square; Mr. Romero had reportedly been in hiding since 08/06/2008, when he when painted the walls of two downtown Beijing hotel rooms with

anti-China statements and Bible verses (ref. c) and had indicated that he would turn himself in to police after the conclusion of the Olympic Games (ref. d). According to his daughter--who called ACS to report her father's detention--he was taken to a tent by uniformed police and held before being driven to another location by plainclothes officers. Mr. Romero turned on his cell phone to record his detention and the audio clip has been loaded onto his website; ACS has copied the file and will forward it to the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) for possible inclusion in the Consular Officer training program. ACS has contacted the Beijing PSB to determine Mr. Romero's status and whereabouts. Anticipating the strong media interest in this story, the Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) prepared press guidance on the surrender and subsequently used it in speaking with reporters from AP, Bloomberg and the Los Angeles Times on 08/25/2008.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

116. (U) IOC Head Urges China to Maintain Press Freedoms: During an 08/24/2008 press conference, IOC President Jacques Rogge urged China to maintain greater freedoms for the foreign media after the end of the Olympic Games. Rogge indicated that he had raised with Chinese officials the extension of relaxed reporting rules beyond their October expiration and had been given "indications that this might be considered." Foreign journalists in Beijing have reported being harassed or detained for covering demonstrations and issues that the Chinese Government considers negative (ref. e).

117. (U) Opening Ceremony Singing Scandal: According to a report from the Hong Kong Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy, Vice President Xi Jinping was the Chinese Communist Party Politburo member who reportedly personally decided that a "cuter" girl should appear in the Opening Ceremony on 08/08/2008 while the real singer sang from behind the scenes (ref. f). The report said it was not known whether Xi's wife, a famous singer in China, was also involved in the decision. Xi Jinping was designated the top Party member in charge of the Olympics earlier this year. He was promoted to the Politburo Standing Committee in October

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2007 and appointed Vice President in March 2008.
RANDT